

best course of action because the materials may include information revealing the private lives of private citizens, people who are involved in this matter only as innocent bystanders.

A number of areas of disagreement remain, but I am pleased that we were able to talk this morning in a bipartisan manner. We look forward to working with our colleagues across the aisle, and I fully intend to hold them to the promises that they have made to us.

ELIMINATE THE FAA'S LIAISON AND FAMILIARIZATION TRAINING PROGRAM

HON. RAY LAHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 1998

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to the frequent flyer program that is currently being run down at the Federal Aviation Administration. But unlike other frequent flyer programs, you don't have to earn your free flight in this program—all you have to do is sign up. What I am referring to, of course, is the FAA's Liaison and Familiarization Training Program (FAM), a program that was originally created to give air traffic controllers an awareness of, and familiarization with, cockpit and pilot procedures by allowing them to ride in the cockpit's jump seat. This program, while laudable in purpose, has unfortunately turned into a "popular perk" for FAA employees who are more interested in getting free air travel for vacations and personal reasons than they are in observing and learning about cockpit and safety procedures. The abuses of this program were so bad, in fact, that the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation recently recommended a number of reforms be made to the program. It is, in the words of one airline's slogan, becoming obvious that FAA employees love to fly, and it shows. Today, I am introducing a bill that will implement the Inspector General's reforms in order to curb the rampant and widespread abuse of the FAM program by FAA employees.

In an August, 3, 1998 memo to Jane Garvey, the FAA Administrator, Kenneth Mead, the DOT's Inspector General (IG), reiterated his concern over the "serious continuing, and widespread lapse of ethics in the Liaison and Familiarization program (FAM)." This program, which dates back to the 1940's, was originally created in order to allow FAA employees, particularly air traffic controllers, to ride in an airline cockpit's jump seat in order to become familiar with the environment in which pilots operate. However, over the past two decades this program has been increasingly misused by employees. And, I don't think I need to remind you, Mr. Speaker, that accepting gifts of free travel is in direct contravention to a host of laws, regulations, and executive orders.

Among the rampant abuses that were detailed in a February 20, 1996 IG report were the following: an employee that took 12 weekend trips in a 15-month period to visit his family in Tampa, Florida; an employee that took 10 weekend trips in a 9-month period to visit the city where he ultimately retired; an employee that took 7 trips to Fort Myers or Tampa, Florida, and 2 trips to Las Vegas, Ne-

vada, utilizing weekends and regular days off to travel; travel by an employee that utilized annual leave or regular days off to take 7 trips to Los Angeles, California, and 1 trip to Munich, Germany; and employee that took 17 trips to his military reserve duty stations; and 7 couples that took 21 flights for extended weekends and vacations. And, according to an article published in the Washington Post, 247,840 authorizations for travel under the auspices of this program were issued by the FAA between January 1993 and April 1994. Unfortunately, the FAA failed to act on this 1996 report, and that is why I am introducing legislation that will reform this program so that these abuses and ethical violations will not occur in the future.

The Inspector General's August 3 memo makes several recommendations for reform. I believe these recommendations are valid, reasonable, and absolutely necessary in order to curb the ethical lapses that have occurred, while still preserving the program's valuable training and safety benefits. My bill simply adopts the recommendations of the Inspector General and requires the FAA to transmit a report to Congress on the implementation of these reforms. Specifically, the IG's report makes the following recommendations precluding FAM travel that "(1) involve travel on leave days or days off; (2) involve scheduled leave of days off between the outgoing flight and the return flight when management makes an affirmative documented determination that such is for legitimate purposes and will not create an appearance of impropriety; or (3) involve foreign overseas travel for an employee in a facility that does not work oceanic airspace." In addition, the IG report makes the further recommendation that "appropriate controls must require preapproval of FAM flights by supervisory personnel and only then when the supervisor determines that the specific flight meets official training needs of the FAA."

It is time that we reform this program. The abuses have gone on for too long, so long, in fact, that the program is considered an entitlement by air traffic controllers in their contract negotiations with the FAA. This program has, according to the IG, become "what is widely understood to be a popular 'perk' for many FAA employees"—a perk that I believe needs to end.

TRIBUTE TO BUD WILSON OF CHULA VISTA, CALIFORNIA FOR THE COMPLETION OF HIS TERM AS PRESIDENT OF THE INDE- PENDENT INSURANCE AGENTS OF AMERICA

HON. BRIAN P. BILBRAY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 1998

Mr. BILBRAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend a fellow Californian and good friend, Bud Wilson of Chula Vista, who last month completed his one-year term as president of the Independent Insurance Agents of America (IIAA), the nation's largest insurance association. Bud's term as president of the IIAA is the crowning accomplishment of his many years of tireless effort and dedication to IIAA, the Insurance Brokers and Agents of the West (IBA West), his 300,000 colleagues across the country, his clients, and his community.

Bud's many years of hard work and leadership as an independent insurance agent have resulted in a distinguished career marked by outstanding service to his colleagues and his profession. On the state level, Bud served IBA West on various committees and as president in 1981. From 1983–1986 he served as the IBA West representative on IIAA's Board of State National Directors. In 1987, Bud received the P.S.W. Ramsden Memorial Award, the highest honor conferred by the California state association.

Later, when elected chairman of IIAA's Government Affairs Committee, Bud's passion for the legislative process resulted in four highly successful years for the organization. In recognition of his exceptional work, Bud was honored with the IIAA's Sydney O. Smith Legislative Award in 1994.

Bud was subsequently elected to IIAA's Executive Committee in 1994 and was selected as IIAA President last year during the Association's 102nd annual convention held in Hawaii. Throughout his time as one of IIAA's top elected officials, he became known for his effectiveness and devotion to the independent agents around the country and for millions of American insurance consumers.

In addition to serving his colleagues and clients, Bud has also been extensively involved in his community. He is past-president of the Chula Vista Rotary Club, the Chula Vista Jaycees, the Chula Vista Community Hospital Board of Trustees, and the Chula Vista Salvation Army. He has also helped with numerous other Chula Vista community projects.

On an interesting aside my colleagues will appreciate, Bud also has the honor of being the nephew of our former colleague the Honorable Bob Wilson of California.

I congratulate my friend and activist citizen for a job extremely well done. Although he is stepping down as IIAA president, I am confident his service to IIAA, his colleagues, and his fellow citizens of Chula Vista will continue for years to come.

THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF TEMPLE BETH-EL

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 1998

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to note that the Temple Beth-El, in the Town of Bethel, New York, is celebrating its 75th anniversary. From its beginnings in a simple barn, this congregation has grown through many tribulations into a thriving, highly accepted community.

The Beth-El congregation was formed near the turn of the century by a small group of summer residents who vacationed at the shores of North White Lake, which is now called Kauneonga Lake. The congregation was comprised of Jews from New York City whose faith inspired them to organize religious services during their summer vacations. The congregation, then called the Congregation Anchai of North White Lake, met in a hotel owned by Charles Kroner. Because the congregation was Orthodox, and allowed no travel on the Sabbath or holidays, the Kroner family went so far as to donate both meals and lodging to worshipers.

The congregation grew quickly and needed a larger, more permanent space to worship. A small house and barn built the previous century was purchased in 1923. Congregation members took down the house and rebuilt the barn into a more suitable place of worship. Services began the following year and the congregation changed its name to Temple Beth-El. This change symbolized both the beginning of a more permanent congregation, as well as pride in their Town: Bethel, New York. As their tale goes deeper than the story of how a barn became temple. The story of the Sisterhood of Temple Beth-El is equally inspiring. They began in the 1940's as a small group of women who organized to provide economic support to their temple. Due to the Orthodox nature of the congregation, women and men were not allowed to sit together during worship. The women endured balcony seats during summer services and were subjected to poor ventilation and buzzing hornets for their faith. In the 1970's the congregation turned conservative, and the women were allowed to join the men on the main floor of the temple. They continued to host pancake breakfasts and barbeques to raise money for both their temple and community. They opened a second hand store to both assist the poor and their congregation.

From these humble beginnings in a barn behind a home, this congregation has grown and thrived. It has hosted more than ten rabbis, endured threats from the Ku Klux Klan, and yet persevered and remained true to the Hebrew meaning of its name, House of God.

I am especially moved by the fond memories members had not only of the services themselves, but the card parties and penny socials hosted by those involved with the temple. It is the tales of Bar Mitzvah's and weddings, births and deaths, which touch me the most. They show the extent to which the temple nourished both the spiritual and social needs of the community.

Praise is best expressed by my constituent Edward Brender in his poem, "The Barn That Became a House of Worship", which reads as follows:

The temple once a farmer's barn; part of America's rural farm
Furnished with a century-old church's pews,
yet filled with devout and dedicated Jews.

At Temple Beth-El, we like to stay with American uplifted heart's we pray.

For 75 years, the temple filled our spiritual needs, while rabbis planted righteous seeds.

The halls resounded with Chief Justice Lawrence H. Cook's praise, reminding us of Hebrew sacrifices during America's revolutionary phase.

During the time of our country's greatest need, recounting tables of Jewish patriots' deeds.

High on a majestic verdant hill stands stately Temple Beth-El; For 75 years a beacon of freedom's faith, spreading boundless love and tales to tell.

I believe that Congregation Temple Beth-El serves as an example to all Americans in our nation hoping for the simple joys of faith and family.

Mr. Speaker, I invite our colleagues to join with me in applauding this congregation for its dedication to both its faith and its community as a whole and extending our best wishes on the occasion of their 75th anniversary and

may Temple Beth-El, enjoy many more years of growth and community service.

PUBLIC EDUCATION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

HON. PETER DEUTSCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 1998

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, today President Clinton visited my home state of Florida to promote the Administration's education initiatives as education policy moves into the 21st Century. While we have made significant progress in recent years, there is a lot of work yet to be done. I rise today to wholeheartedly support the strengthening of public education through these initiatives. In order to meet the high education standards that we are setting for our children today, we need to provide public schools with the tools for preparing our children for the challenges of the next millennium.

Class sizes must be reduced, new teachers must be hired, and new schools must be built. Schools must also be made safer and, therefore, more conducive to learning. I believe that the expansion of charter school programs is a positive trend which will benefit children throughout the United States. Lastly, federal tax credits will be a crucial to support the renovation and modernization of our schools, many of which have become plagued by structural and age-related problems.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the Administration's program for public education. In so doing, Congress will fulfill its commitment to America's future.

TRIBUTE TO CADMAN TOWERS AT 101 CLARK STREET IN BROOKLYN HEIGHTS BROOKLYN ON THEIR 25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 1998

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to the residents of Cadman Towers at 101 Clark Street in Brooklyn Heights, Brooklyn on their 25th Anniversary Celebration of the founding of the Towers.

For twenty-five years, families have grown and prospered in this supportive and unique community in Brooklyn Heights. Cadman Towers is the eastern border of Brooklyn's historic Brooklyn Heights neighborhood and its residents have added diversity and vitality to this already thriving area.

I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating Cadman Towers and its three hundred residents on this milestone and wish you many happy anniversaries to come!

PUNJAB GOVERNMENT TRIES TO SHUT DOWN PEOPLE'S COMMISSION FOR EXPOSING GENOCIDE

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 1998

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I was disturbed to learn recently that the Chief Minister of Punjab, Parkash Singh Badal, and many political leaders there are trying to outlaw the Punjab People's Commission, which is exposing the genocide against the Sikhs by the police and security forces.

The Punjab government tried to prevent the commission's first meeting by canceling the meeting space that the commission had reserved. However, one of the local Gurdwaras in Chandigarh offered its meeting space and the meeting was held anyway.

During that meeting the People's Commission issued citations in more than 90 cases against police officers who have committed atrocities against the Sikhs of Punjab, Khalistan. It took up more than 3,000 other cases. This shows the pattern of repression, terror, and genocide against the Sikhs in Punjab, Khalistan. That is why the Badal government and the political leaders there want the commission closed down.

We cannot sit idly by while this vital commission is destroyed. It is the only group within Punjab, Khalistan that is exposing the genocide. The Council of Khalistan has issued an excellent Open Letter on this issue. I urge my colleagues, especially those who are always lecturing us about how wonderful Indian democracy is, to read it carefully.

In light of the facts presented in this letter, I call on my colleagues to maintain sanctions against India and to support an internationally-supervised plebiscite in Punjab, Khalistan so that the Sikhs of that troubled state can vote on whether they should chart their own course separately from Indian tyranny.

I would like to insert that Open Letter into the RECORD.

OPEN LETTER TO THE SIKH NATION
(From Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh)

SUPPORT THE PEOPLE'S COMMISSION—ATTACKS ON COMMISSION BY BJP, CONGRESS, AND CPI SHOW WHO IS BEHIND SIKH GENOCIDE AND DEEPEN THE SIKH NATION'S WOUNDS

To the Khalsa Panth:

The BJP, Congress, and CPI have finally exposed themselves. They have revealed their own involvement in the genocide against the Sikh Nation. They don't want the truth to come out because it will show their immoral deeds. That is why they want to shut down the Peoples' Commission. Even the Badal government seems to agree. It made every effort to prevent the commission's first meeting from occurring. It is no wonder. The commission issued 90 citations against police officers and received 3,000 more cases. Evidently it is making the political leaders of all stripes nervous. They are now shivering with fear that their part in supporting the genocide against the Sikh Nation will be exposed.

Do not let these corrupt leaders succeed in their effort to shut down the Peoples' Commission. The work that it is doing is too important to the Sikh Nation and all of humanity. The Armenians will not let the genocide against them 80 years ago be forgotten; the Jews will not let the world forget the Holocaust 50 years after it happened. How can the